



## CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM

# NEWS...

March 1999

### New Documents Available

Revised program plans are now available from CALFED. These plans provide detailed information that supplements both the Revised Phase II Report.

The Revised Phase II Report, which was published in December 1998, is a status report on the CALFED Program. It presents a framework for the draft preferred program alternative, and outlines the work planned for 1999.

CALFED plans to release the revised draft programmatic EIS/EIR this summer. This release will be followed by a formal 90-day public comment period. While the program plans will undergo some additional revision before being released again with the draft EIS/EIR in June, this February release allows the public some additional time for review of the documents in preparation for the formal public comment period.

All nine volumes of the program plans are packaged on one Mac and PC compatible CD-ROM, or individually in printed versions. The program plans are also posted on the CALFED web site, <http://calfed.ca.gov>. To order copies of any CALFED documents, call 916-657-2666 or 1-800-7005752.

#### Program plans –

- Ecosystem Restoration Program, Volume 1 – Ecological Attributes of the San Francisco Bay-Delta Watershed
- Ecosystem Restoration Program, Volume 2 – Ecological Management Zone Visions
- Strategic Plan for Ecosystem Restoration
- Long-Term Levee Protection Plan
- Water Quality Program

- Water Transfer Program
- Water Use Efficiency Program
- Watershed Program Plan
- Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan Maps

### Water Use Efficiency Program Update

Development of CALFED's Water Use Efficiency (WUE) Program demonstrates the importance of stakeholder input and participation. Five workshops held in February were part of the latest effort to ensure that CALFED's WUE Program is effective and cost-efficient

The Water Use Efficiency Program, one of CALFED's eight program elements, reflects CALFED's strong commitment to water conservation and efficient water use – and the high priority that Californians place on water conservation. The WUE includes actions relating to agricultural and urban water use, wastewater recycling, and managed wetlands.

The WUE Program will help meet CALFED's goals for water supply reliability, ecosystem restoration and improved water quality. Irrecoverable water losses can be reduced through water conservation, water quality improved by reducing contaminated runoff, and water demands reduced and instream flows improved through demand management actions.

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Local implementation is an important focus of the WUE Program. Experience has shown that the most effective water conservation and management programs have local roots. When local water agencies and water users are involved in setting conservation objectives, they bring a higher level of motivation and creative problem-solving to the process.

CALFED intends to tap these valuable local resources through a carefully guided incentive program. Loans and technical assistance are proposed for local entities that wish to implement locally cost-effective water use efficiency actions or projects. For example, if a municipality needed help financing or designing a planned water recycling program that would provide a positive return for its investment, loans and technical assistance could be available to help the agency overcome financial or design barriers.

Grants would be awarded to local entities that plan to implement water use efficiency actions that provide benefits outside their service area. Consider an irrigation district willing to administer a source control project to reduce the amount of salts from irrigation drainage entering the Bay-Delta Estuary. The benefits of such a program would be realized in the estuary, not within the irrigation district's service area. This type of "state-wide" cost-effectiveness could qualify for grant funding.

In addition to the incentive program, directed studies and research will be conducted to improve understanding of certain conservation issues, such as the potential benefits of reducing on-farm evaporation.

Water conservation experts from the Department of Water Resources, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Bureau of Reclamation are working cooperatively on CALFED's Water Use Efficiency Program. Several stakeholder efforts also are involved in the WUE Program, such as the California Urban Water Conservation Council, the Agricultural Water

Management Council, the Water Reuse Association, and the Interagency Coordinated Program. The combination of state-federal-stakeholder cooperation, and building upon existing water use efficiency tools, information and research, will enable CALFED to deliver the most credible, cost-effective water use efficiency program possible.

## **BDAC Focus for '99**

The Bay-Delta Advisory Council (BDAC) is the federally-chartered group that represents the general public to CALFED. BDAC is made up of over 30 representatives of California stakeholder groups, including agriculture, business, urban water users, environmental interests, commercial and sport fishing, and various regions of the state. Members are appointed by either the governor of California or the secretary of the U.S. Interior Department. BDAC members provide input and advice to the CALFED Program

As the development of a preferred alternative nears completion, BDAC meetings and workgroups will focus on three key issues: governance and assurances, including Program oversight and management; financing the Program, including defining "beneficiaries pay" and public/private cost allocations; and issues relating to the draft preferred alternative, particularly the water management strategy and the development of performance standards for all program elements. Some workgroups will re-organize or retire as their work is completed.

BDAC is meeting in Bakersfield March 24-25. Members will tour local facilities on March 24. Major agenda items for March 25 are the water management strategy, governance and Stage 1 actions. Other BDAC meetings are scheduled for Sacramento, May 13, and San Diego, July 8-9.

BDAC meetings are open to the public and all interested parties are encouraged to attend.

## What Happens to Comments?

Everyday, the CALFED Program receives comments by phone, fax, e-mail and traditional mail, and in meetings and workshops. Technical staff evaluates all comments. These comments have led to many changes in the Program and are instrumental in the development of a long-term solution for the Bay-Delta system.

### What Happened to My Comments about the March Draft EIS/EIR?

Everyone who submits a written comment during the public comment period for the EIS/EIR receives a letter acknowledging its receipt. Comments are forwarded to the appropriate CALFED technical staff member for analysis and response. Some comments may require new research or technical analysis.

Each revised program plan includes a section that describes in broad-terms changes that were made to the plan as a result of comments received on the March 1998 draft EIS/EIR. Because there will be a revised draft EIS/EIR later this year, the CALFED Program did not respond individually to comments.

A full "Response to Comments" will be part of the final EIS/EIR.

## Local Input Needed for Conjunctive Use Program

CALFED is asking for local input to identify possible conjunctive use projects that will meet both local water needs and CALFED Program objectives.

Conjunctive use is an important and effective water management tool in California. Many conjunctive use projects have been effectively used in managing local water resources. A groundwater basin can be operated in combination or "conjunction" with a surface water storage and conveyance system.

During times of abundant rainfall, users rely on surface water supplies and intentionally recharge groundwater basins. Then in times of drought or reduced surface water supplies, users can rely on the groundwater basins.

In its water management strategy, CALFED has identified conjunctive use as one of the tools it will use to help meet the CALFED objectives of increasing water supply reliability and restoring ecosystem health to the Bay-Delta system. CALFED is relying on local identification of potential conjunctive use projects and anticipates providing technical and financial support for evaluating and developing projects.

In response to concerns about possible groundwater depletion, third-party impacts, water rights issues and other possible consequences of conjunctive use operations, CALFED is planning to pursue only those projects that meet the following criteria:

- Local support for the project
- An identified source of water
- A plan to effectively manage, protect and monitor the local groundwater basin
- Consistency with CALFED goals and objectives
- Availability of local funding to operate and maintain the project.

CALFED has sent a letter of inquiry to over 3,000 agencies, water districts and individuals. Although support for projects will not be limited to those responding to this inquiry, these responses will help in the evaluation of the potential scope of the program.

Anyone interested in submitting a project proposal or project concept to CALFED for consideration, or with questions about CALFED's conjunctive use program should contact Anthony Saracino, conjunctive use coordinator, 916-688-5807.

## CALFED Timeline — Milestones & Key Dates

- 3/98-7/98** CALFED releases draft EIS/EIR for public review and comment.
- 12/18/98** CALFED releases Revised Phase II Report, outlining preferred alternative framework.
- 1/99** CALFED holds public workshops on preferred alternative framework.
- 3/99** CALFED releases revised program plans for public review.
- 6/99-9/99** CALFED expects to issue revised draft EIS/EIR followed by 90-day comment period
- 4/00** CALFED expects to issue final EIS/EIR/ followed by 30-day comment period.
- 6/00** Approval of final program plan by state and federal governments.
- 2000-  
2030** Solution plan implemented.



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*The mission of the CALFED Bay-Delta  
Program is to develop a long-term  
comprehensive plan that will restore  
ecological health and improve water  
management for beneficial uses of the  
Bay-Delta system.*



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